



Kitāb al-Waṣiyya

Book of the Testament

al-Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, Muḥammad al-Nu'mān ibn al-Thābit

Related by Shaykh Muhammad Nabulsi

Translated with Notes by Shaykh Tahir Mahmood Kiani

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All praise is due to Allāh, the Sustainer of [all] the worlds, and may blessings be upon the leader of [all] the Messengers, Muḥammad, [upon] his family and [upon] all of his Companions. This is the Book of the Testament (*kitāb al-waṣiyya*) by the Greatest Imām (*al-imām al-a'zam*) Abū Ḥanīfa, Allāh have mercy on him.

When the Imām of the Muslims ¹ fell ill with a severe illness, he gathered around himself his companions and his pupils and they desired from him a testament [based] upon the path of the Sunnah ². So, he ordered his servant that he sit him up, and his servant sat behind his back and he ³ propped him against himself. Thereafter, he ⁴, Allāh have mercy on him, said:

Know you all, my companions and my brothers, that the creed of the People of the Sunnah and the Majority (*Ahlul Sunnah wal Jamā'ah*) is based upon twelve characteristics. Of you, whoever is firm upon these characteristics shall not be an innovator and nor a dissenter. So, it is incumbent upon you [to hold firm] to these characteristics so that you may be included in the intercession of our Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him, on the Day of [Judgment and] Resurrection.

He said:

Faith (*īmān*); it is confession by the tongue, assentation by the soul and cognizance with the heart. Confession alone does not make up Faith because if it was Faith, then all of the hypocrites would be believers. Likewise, Cognizance

¹ Al-Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, Allāh have mercy on him.

² Of the Messenger Muḥammad, Allāh bless him and grant him peace.

³ The servant.

⁴ Al-Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, Allāh have mercy on him.

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alone does not make up Faith because if it was Faith then all of the People of the Book (*Ahlul Kitāb*) would be believers. With regards to the hypocrites, Allāh the Exalted says: ‘and Allāh bears witness that surely the hypocrites are liars.’ (63; 1) With regards to the People of the Book, Allāh the Exalted says: ‘Those to whom we have given the Scripture, they recognise it ⁵ just as they recognise their own sons.’ (6; 20).

(1) Faith does not increase nor decrease because its decreasing is inconceivable but with the increasing of disbelief and its increasing is inconceivable but with the decreasing of disbelief. How can it be pertinent that one person be in the same state a believer and a disbeliever? A believer is a believer truly, and a disbeliever is truly a disbeliever. There is no [element of] doubt in Faith, just as there is no [element of] doubt in disbelief, because of the word of Allāh the Exalted: ‘They are, truly, the believers.’ (8; 4), and [because of Allāh’s word:] ‘They are, truly, the disbelievers.’ (4; 151) The sinners of the nation (*ummah*) of Muḥammad, peace be upon him, are all believers, truly, and they are not disbelievers.

(2) Action (*‘amal*) is other than Faith and Faith is other than Action, according to the evidence that a lot of the time [the obligation of an] action is lifted from the believer and it is not possible to be said [that] Faith has been lifted from him. So, the menstruating woman (*ḥā'id*) and the woman in childbed (*nafsā*), Allāh lifts from them [the obligations of] prayer and fasting, and it is not possible to be said [that] He has lifted Faith from them, or [that] He has ordered them with the abandonment of Faith. The Canon (*Shar'*) says to her: ‘Leave the fasting, thereafter, fulfil it [later].’, but it is not possible that it be said: ‘Leave the Faith, thereafter, fulfil it [later].’ It is permitted that it be said: ‘There is no [obligation of paying] *zakāt* on the poor man.’, but it is not possible that it be said: ‘There is no [obligation of] Faith on the poor man.’ The predetermination of good and bad is entirely from Allāh the Exalted, because if one assumes that the predetermination of good and bad is from [someone] other than He, he shall become a disbeliever in Allāh, and his monotheism (*tawḥīd*) shall stand void if monotheism was for him [a creed].

(3) We affirm that actions ⁶ are three: [I] obligatory, [II] supererogatory and [III] sinful. [I] Obligatory [actions] are according to the order of Allāh the Exalted, His will, His love, His pleasure, His decree, His foreordainment, His creation, His judgment, His knowledge, His aid and His writing in the Preserved Tablet (*lawḥ mahfūz*). [II] Supererogatory [actions] are not according to the order of Allāh the Exalted, but [they are] with His will, His love, His pleasure, His foreordainment, His judgment, His knowledge, His aid, His creation and His writing in the Preserved Tablet. [III] The sinful are not according to the order of Allāh the Exalted, but [they are] with His will, not with His love but with His

⁵ this Book, the Noble Qur’ān.

⁶ This also refers to omissions, where the command of not doing an act is applied, like that of abstaining from the consumption of alcohol, etc.

decree, not with His pleasure but with His foreordainment and His creation, not with His aid but with His forsaking and His knowledge and His writing in the Preserved Tablet.

(4) We affirm that Allāh the Exalted has established (*istawā*) himself on the Throne without there being any necessity or sedentariness (*istiqrār*) for Himself [of it]. He is the Keeper of the Throne and of [anything] other than the Throne without any need [for Himself to it]. If he [ever] was in need [of it] then he would not have been able to bring the world into existence or dispose of it, just like the two creations [are unable]. ⁷ If he [ever] was needy of sitting (*julūs*) and settling (*qarār*) [on the Throne], then where was Allāh before the creation of the Throne? May Allāh be exalted over that, in being high and great.

(5) We affirm that the Qur'ān is the Speech of Allāh (*Kalām Allāh*) the Exalted, uncreated, His inspiration, His revelation and His quality. It is not He and nor [is it anything] other than He, but it is His quality in reality. It is written in copies, recited by tongues, preserved in bosoms yet not [simply] a [transient] state in them. ⁸ Letters, paper and writing, all of them are created, because they are the actions of creatures. The Speech of Allāh the Exalted is uncreated because writing, letters, words and verses are all indication of the Qur'ān [being] a necessity of the creatures to them. The Speech of Allāh the Exalted exists in His being and its meaning is understood by these things. ⁹ So, whoever says that the Speech of Allāh the Exalted is created, he is a disbeliever in Allāh the Great. Allāh the Exalted is worshipped. He does not cease to be what He was. His Speech is recited, written and preserved without it being disconnected from Him.

(6) We affirm that the most excellent [person] of this nation, after our Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him, is Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, thereafter 'Umar, thereafter 'Uthmān, thereafter 'Alī, pleasure of Allāh the Exalted be upon them all, because of the Word of Allāh the Exalted: 'The foremost ones, the foremost ones, [it is] they [who] are the close ones [to Allāh].' (56; 10 – 11) Each who was prior [in Caliphate], he is more excellent [in status]. Every pious believer loves them, and every abject hypocrite hates them.

(7) We affirm that the creature, with [all] his actions, his confessions ¹⁰ and his knowledge, is created. So, when it is the one doing [the act himself] created, then it is even more so that his actions are [also] created.

(8) We affirm that Allāh the Exalted created the creation and they had no strength because they are weak, humble, and Allāh the Exalted is their Creator, Sustainer, because of the Word of Allāh the Exalted: 'Allāh is the one Who

⁷ Humans and the Jinn.

⁸ Tongues, copies, bosoms etc.

⁹ Letters, words, writing, etc.

¹⁰ This includes his profession of belief as well as all other utterances and expressions.

created you, thereafter sustained you, thereafter He will cause you to die, thereafter will give you life [again].’ (30;40) Earning [wealth] is lawful, the accumulation of wealth from lawful sources is lawful, and the accumulation of wealth from unlawful sources is unlawful. People are of three kinds; [i.] the believer who is sincere in his faith, [ii.] the disbeliever who is stubborn in his infidelity and [iii.] the hypocrite adulating in his hypocrisy. Allāh the Exalted has prescribed [good] action for the believer, belief for the disbeliever and sincerity for the hypocrite, because of the Word of Allāh: ‘O’ Mankind! Fear your Lord.’ (4;1 / 22;1), meaning, ‘O’ believers! Be dutiful., ‘O’ Disbelievers! Believe.’ And ‘O’ Hypocrites! Be sincere.’

(9) We affirm that ability comes with the action, not before the action and neither after the action. [This is] because if it was before the action, then the creature would be independent of Allāh the Exalted at the time of [performing] the action, and this is against the affirmation of the [divine] text¹¹, for the Word of Allāh the Exalted [is]: ‘And Allāh is independent [of needs] and you [all] are poor.’¹² (47; 38) If it was after the action, then that would be impossible because it demands the acquiring of an action without ability or power.

(10) We affirm that wiping over the moccasins is permitted; for the resident, one day and one night, and for the traveller, three days and [including] its nights. [It is] because the [Prophetic] narration (*ḥadīth*) has reached us like this. So, whoever denies [this], then disbelief is feared for him, because it¹³ is close to widely-reported continuous narration (*al-khabar al-mutawātir*). Shortening [of prayer] (*qasr*) and breaking of fast (*ifṭār*) during travel are exemption[s] according to the text of the Book¹⁴ because of the Word of Allāh the Exalted: ‘And when you travel in the land, there is no blame on you that you make short of your prayer.’ (4; 101), and in [the case of] breaking the fast, the Word of Allāh the Exalted [is]: ‘And whoever amongst you is ill or on a journey then [prescribed] number [of days is to be made up] of days later.’ (2; 184)

(11) We affirm that Allāh the Exalted ordered the Pen with, ‘Write!’ The Pen, thus said, ‘What shall I write, O’ Lord?’ Allāh the Exalted said, ‘Write whatever happens up until the Day of [Judgment and] Resurrection.’ for the Word of Allāh the Exalted [is]: ‘and everything they do is [written] in the Books [of Deeds], every minor and major [affair] is recorded [therein].’ (54; 52-53)

(12) We affirm that the torment of the grave exists, there is no doubt. The interrogation by Munkar and Nakir is a reality, because of the reaching [us] of the [Prophetic] tradition. Paradise and [Hell] Fire are a reality, and both of them are created, existing right now, they will not perish and nor shall their dwellers perish, for the Word of Allāh the Exalted, with regards to the believers, is:

¹¹ Qur’ān.

¹² in requirement of needs and dependent on others.

¹³ the respective Prophetic narration.

¹⁴ the Noble Qur’ān.

‘[Paradise has been] prepared for the righteous.’ (3;133), and with regards the disbelievers: ‘[Hell has been] prepared for the disbelievers.’ (3;131). Allāh the Exalted created them both for reward and punishment. The Balance (*mīzān*) is a reality, for the Word of Allāh the Exalted [is]: ‘We shall set up just balances on the Day of Resurrection.’ (21;47) The reading of the Books [of Records] is a reality, because of His Word: ‘Read your book. You yourself are enough today as a reckoner against your own self.’ (17;14)

(13) We affirm that Allāh the Almighty will bring back to life these souls after death, and He will raise them up on a day the duration of which shall be fifty thousand years, for requital, reward and the furnishing of rights, because of the Word of Allāh the Exalted: ‘And Allāh will surely raise up [all] those in the graves.’ (22; 7) The meeting of Allāh the Exalted, for the dwellers of Paradise, is a reality, [which is] without modality, anthropomorphisation and nor direction. The intercession of our Prophet Muḥammad, Allāh bless him and grant him peace, is for whosoever is a believer of [the people of] Paradise, even though he is [a committer] of Major sins. ‘Ā’isha, the Mother of the Believers, is kept pure of fornication and free from whatever the Rawāfiḍ say [accusing her]. The dwellers of Paradise shall remain forever in Paradise, and the dwellers of [Hell] Fire shall remain in [Hell] Fire forever, because of the Word of Allāh the Exalted with regards to the believers: ‘They are the inmates of Paradise; in it shall they remain forever.’ (2; 82), and with regards to the disbelievers: ‘They are the inmates of [Hell] Fire; in it shall they remain forever.’ (2; 81).”

